



HANDBOOK ENCOURAGES THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY TO PROMOTE SAFETY BELT USE PROGRAMS

About 900 heavy truck occupants are killed in about 400,000 police-reported crashes each year, making truck driving second only to mining in fatalities per 100,000 workers. Truck occupants experience about 6,000 severe injuries and 39,000 minor to moderate injuries annually. In addition to the number of injuries, the *severity* of crash-related injuries of truck occupants is significantly greater than it would be if more truck drivers and passengers used safety belts.

To help mitigate these losses, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) prepared a brief how-to handbook, *Safety Belt Use in Large Trucks: A Guide to Encourage Safety Belt Use Among Drivers of Heavy Trucks*. This handbook will help terminal supervisors, safety professionals, company executives, and others in the industry increase safety belt use among their drivers. It includes successful examples from companies which have dramatically increased safety belt use among commercial drivers and reduced injuries and expenses in the process.

Safety Belt Use in Large Trucks includes copier-ready materials that may be used individually, or as a whole, depending on a company's practical needs. There are sample forms and fact sheets that can be reproduced with a company's logo.

A number of public agencies and organizations have conducted safety belt use surveys of commercial drivers, with mixed results. A 1991 study in four states showed that safety belt usage among drivers of heavy trucks increased from about 6 percent in 1982 to about 55 percent in 1991. Other surveys indicate that commercial driver belt use rates fall well below 55 percent. Safety belts are vital in preventing

fatalities and serious injuries. Studies have shown that when lap/shoulder belts are used, the risk of fatal or serious motor vehicle occupant injury is reduced by 40 to 55 percent. Furthermore, Federal regulations and most states require that commercial drivers wear safety belts.

FACT SHEETS

Sample Corporate Policy Statement
Common Myths and Facts
Sample Two-Minute Pep Talk
Benefits of Belt Use in Large Trucks
Calendar of Activities
Sample Driver Pledge Form
Sample Topics for a Training Program
Case Histories
Checklist for Managers
Critical Checklist for Drivers
Quizzes
... and more ...

The trucking industry can improve occupant safety in heavy trucks by combining proven promotional methods with company policies to encourage safety belt use. This handbook describes the essential elements of a safety belt use program, provides practical guidance on how to proceed, includes copier ready materials, and provides sources for additional information and materials.

For more information on this subject or for a copy of *Safety Belt Use in Large Trucks: A Guide to Encourage Safety Belt Use Among Drivers of Heavy Trucks*, write to Jack K. White, Office of Occupant Protection, NTS-11, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street S.W., Washington, DC 20590, or send a fax to (202) 366-2766.



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